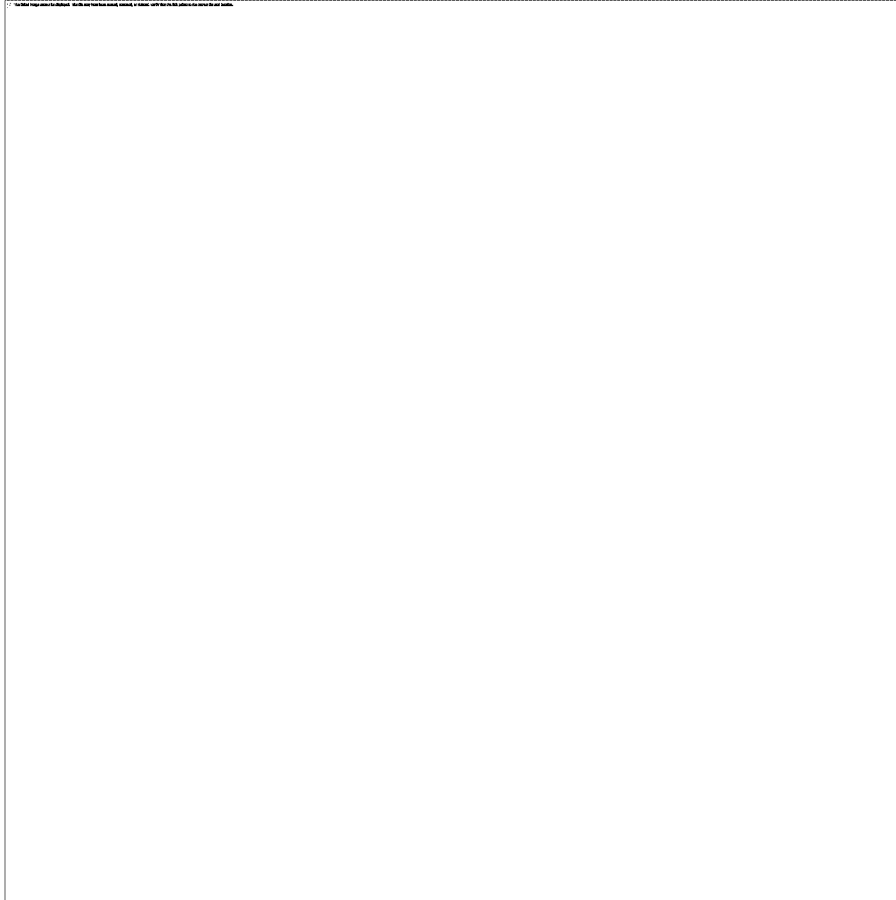


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NEWS UPDATE

April 1, 2020

Top Story

Left-Behind Industries Clamor for Billions in Next Stimulus Bill

By Jennifer A Dlouhy, Ari Natter and Naomi Nix, Bloomberg • • Posted March 31, 2020

A Trump administration plan to spend \$3 billion buying as much as 77 million barrels of crude oil for the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve was cut from last week's legislation, after Democrats made clear they would demand clean energy investments in exchange. That same trade could arise in another round, and lobbyists for electric vehicles, power storage companies and renewable electricity developers are already preparing. Wind and solar developers are asking for more time to get projects in service and still collect the full value of renewable energy tax credits that are set to begin phasing down next year. [[read more ...](#)]

Trump calls for \$2 trillion infrastructure bill to help economy during coronavirus crisis

By Lisa Lambert and Tim Ahmann, Reuters • • Posted March 31, 2020

President Donald Trump on Tuesday said the U.S. Congress should pass a \$2 trillion spending plan to update the country's roads, bridges and other infrastructure, calling for it to be included in the next bill lawmakers are currently drafting to respond to the coronavirus crisis, which they refer to as "Phase 4."

[read more ...]

Coronavirus

The coronavirus is deadly enough. But some experts suspect bad air makes it worse.

By Chris Mooney, Washington Post • • Posted March 31, 2020

"Given what we know now, it is very likely that people who are exposed to more air pollution and who are smoking tobacco products are going to fare worse if infected with covid than those who are breathing cleaner air, and who don't smoke," said Aaron Bernstein, the interim director of the Center for Climate, Health, and the Global Environment at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. [read more ...]

Car Rule

Trump administration moves forward with looser air rules as respiratory disease grips U.S.

By Dino Grandoni, Washington Post • • Posted March 31, 2020

The Trump administration is moving forward with easing restrictions on air pollution even as the novel coronavirus — and the deadly respiratory disease it causes — grips the country. The timing has incensed President Trump critics, who accuse the administration of taking steps that will reduce air quality at a time when scientists are beginning to consider whether pollution increases the risk of coronavirus infection and intensifies the symptoms of covid-19.

[read more ...]

Trump administration to finalize weaker mileage standards, dealing a blow to Obama-era climate policy

By Juliet Eilperin and Brady Dennis, Washington Post • • Posted March 31, 2020

The Trump administration is set as soon as Tuesday to undercut President Barack Obama's most significant effort to combat climate change, finalizing a rule that would weaken the federal government's gas mileage standards for the nation's cars and pickup trucks, according to two federal officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because the rule was not yet public. The rule will require U.S. cars, pickup trucks and SUVs to improve average fuel efficiency by 1.5 percent per year between model years 2021 and 2026, compared to a nearly 5 percent annual increase put in place under the Obama administration. [read more ...]

EPA Rule Provides No Incentive for Ethanol High-Octane Future

By Todd Neeley, DTN Reporter • • Posted March 31, 2020

The EPA release of a new fuel-efficiency rule on Tuesday was met with disappointment by ethanol industry interest groups, as the rule provides no incentive for higher ethanol blends or flexible-fuel vehicles. The Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicles rule sets corporate average fuel

economy and carbon-emissions standards for model years 2021-2026 passenger cars and light trucks. [read more ...]

Trump admin finalizes clean cars rollback

By Maxine Joselow, E&E News reporter • • Posted March 31, 2020

"The path of costly, prolonged litigation was entirely avoidable, but in the midst of an economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, that is the path this administration has chosen," Carper said. "The path of costly, prolonged litigation was entirely avoidable, but in the midst of an economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, that is the path this administration has chosen," Carper said. "The auto sector is already reeling from economic turmoil related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and this rule will lead to prolonged litigation, regulatory uncertainty and economic disarray," he said. [read more ...]

Markets

U.S. farmers plan huge corn crop despite price drop, ethanol collapse

By Mark Weinraub, Reuters • • Posted April 1, 2020

U.S. farmers plan to plant their biggest corn acreage in eight years this spring, saying the grain is the best option in a tough farm economy despite weak demand from the biofuel industry as the coronavirus spreads. The U.S. Agriculture Department in its annual prospective plantings report, which is based on a survey of about 80,000 farmers taken during the first two weeks of March, on Tuesday forecast corn plantings of 96.990 million acres, topping already robust market expectations. [read more ...]

Valero Closing Down Two Ethanol Plants

By KRVN • • Posted March 31, 2020

U.S. fuel ethanol producer and refiner Valero is shutting down two of its ethanol plants, one in Nebraska and the other in Iowa. They're also declaring "force majeure" on shipments for dried distillers' grains or corn purchases, which means they won't be able to meet contracted demands because of unforeseeable conditions. The force majeure is because of a lack of storage availability for corn or ethanol as demand for fuel drops and storage remains limited due to the excess supply. The coronavirus outbreak is causing Americans to drive considerably less than usual, so the low demand and excess supply are forcing Valero to close plants in Albion, Nebraska, and Albert City, Iowa. [read more ...]

Energy bust threatens farmer earnings

By Connor Hyde, Argus Media • • Posted March 31, 2020

Debt-laden farmers face a collapsing energy market that threatens to stunt corn demand and overall revenue after weathering last season's historic flooding and a trade war. Plunging oil prices and waning gasoline demand during the last two weeks have further crunched ethanol production margins, forcing many manufacturers to idle operations or curtail production during the last two weeks — eroding near-term corn demand. About 20pc of ethanol plants in the US have idled and another 40-50 facilities curbed output, according to the Renewable Fuels Association. [read more ...]

GRAINS-Corn slumps as ethanol makers feel coronavirus constraints

By Karl Plume, Bloomberg • • Posted March 31, 2020

U.S. corn futures fell more than 1% on Monday on slowing grain demand from ethanol makers, as tightening coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions limited demand for the biofuel. Soybeans eased too, although losses were limited by concerns about supplies from South America, while wheat, which showed early gains as top exporter Russia appeared poised to restrict shipments, also retreated. [[read more ...](#)]

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